Diploma Thesis Evaluation Form

Author: Zuzana Kovacikova

Title: Balance of Identity and Balance of Power: The Case of Conflict Dynamics between Saudi Arabia and Iran

Programme/year: International Security Studies (2019)

Author of Evaluation (supervisor/external assessor): Emil Aslan

Criteria	Definition	Maximum	Points
Major Criteria			
	Research question, definition of objectives	10	6
	Theoretical/ conceptual framework	30	20
	Methodology, analysis, argument	40	35
Total		*80*	59
Minor Criteria			
	Sources	10	10
	Style	5	5
	Formal requirements	5	5
Total		*20*	*20*
TOTAL		*100*	*79*

Evaluation

Major criteria: The RQ is workable, but somewhat banal. It might have been better anchored in the current state of (theoretical) knowledge. The central concept used by the author is rather vaguely linked to the actual RQ.

The depth of the empirical argument is impressive though as the author works with a plethora of English, Persian, and English-language sources.

The author also performs good analytical skills working out a solid piece of rather area studies-related knowledge.

Minor criteria:

The thesis is well-structured, well-written, and well-argued.

Overall evaluation:

The reviewed M.A. thesis is impressive in terms of its empirical detail, factual accuracy, and appears to be innovative with regard to its analytical findings. On the downside: It is based on a rather weak use of general (theoretical) knowledge and its findings add little to the latter.

Suggested grade: C

Signature: Emil Aslan